ROLE OF SARVA SHIKSHA ABHIYAN IN EDUCATING TRIBAL CHILDREN IN JHARKHAND: A GEOGRAPHICAL STUDY OF LATEHAR DISTRICT

1. INTRODUCTION:

Education, which is most significant for the development of society and any nation, faces global challenges with millions unable to access it, particularly in India, the second most populated country in the world. Recognizing this, India has implemented various programmes including constitutional safeguards, for instance, providing primary education is a constitutional obligation of the government, outlined in Article 45 of the Directive Principles of the Indian Constitution and the 86th Amendment Act, 2002. This mandates free and compulsory education for every child up to the age of 14. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act came into force on April 1, 2010, marking a historic milestone as it granted education the same legal status as the Right to Life provided by Article 21A of the Indian Constitution. Every child aged 6 to 14 is entitled to 8 years of elementary education in a nearby school. National flagship programs like the Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) since 1995 and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) since 2001 launched with aims to strengthen the school education system and ensure quality education. Despite these efforts, overcoming illiteracy remains a significant challenge. The New Education Policy, 2020, aims to address this challenge to a great extent.

The proposed research topic, "Role of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in Educating Tribal Children in Jharkhand: A Geographical Study of Latehar District," is interdisciplinary and applied in nature. There has been a long tradition of impact studies of developmental and welfare programs, especially in applied geography basically focusing on geographical space, distribution, arrangements, spatial organization, population, and areal variation. The present study will focus on the impact appraisal of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) in educating tribal children, particularly in the context of equity, accessibility, retention, dropout rates, and learning outcomes. It will also evaluate variations

in the impact of SSA among children of all social groups, including gender gaps, as well as block level variations.

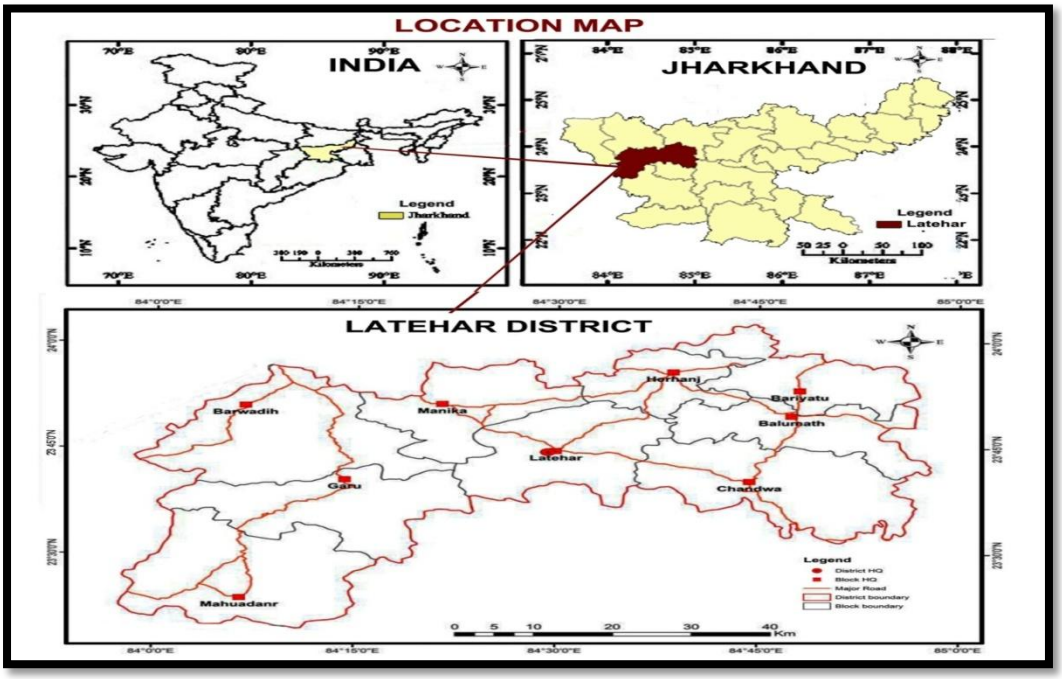
This topic is unique because there has been limited research specifically focusing on educating children, especially in a region with a high concentration of tribal population like Jharkhand. As Jharkhand is a state with a predominantly tribal population and free and compulsory quality education at elementary level is a fundamental right, the proposed research will provide an in-depth understanding of different concerns related to SSA, education of tribal children, educational landscape at elementary level. It will also provide understanding of hurdles to the effective functioning of SSA, community engagement, and facilitating development of elementary education in the study area.

The study area, Latehar District, comprises 09 Community Development Blocks with a total of 769 villages. Study will employ both primary and secondary data. A multistage sampling approach will be employed to collect primary data. Data will be related to geographic characteristics, availability of educational facilities, access to elementary education in context to enrollment, retention, dropout, learning outcome and community engagement including data related to controlling factors, block-wise variations, gender level variations, community level variations in access to elementary education in the area under study. The collected data (both primary and secondary) will then be analyzed and interpreted using various statistical tools.

- **ABOUT THE STUDY AREA LATEHAR DISTRICT:**

The study area Latehar District is a district of Jharkhand Sate and was created on April 4, 2001. Previously, it was a subdivision of the old Palamau district of Jharkhand. It extends between 23^0 19' 28"and 24^0 02' 38" Northern latitude and 83^0 57' 48" and 84^0 57' 50" East longitude. The geographical area of the district is 4291 sq. Km (Census of India, 2011). Latehar has been named after the village of the same name on the Ranchi-Daltonganj Road. It is 100 km away by road from Ranchi, the capital of state. It is located in the north–west corner of Jharkhand in the Palamu Commissionaire. It is bounded in the north by Palamu and Chatra districts, in the south by Gumla and Lohardaga districts in the east by Ranchi and Chatra districts and in the west by Garhwa district

and Chattisgarh state.The district has two (02) Sub-divisions (Latehar and Mahuadar), nine (09) Blocks (Balumath, Bariyatu, Barwadih, Chandwa, Garu, Herhanj, Latehar, Mahuadar and Manika), one (01) Statutory Town (Latehar), three (03) Census Towns (Chandwa, Alaudia and Barwadih), one hundred fifteen (115) Gram Pnachayat and seven hundred nine (769) Villages. Total population of the district is 7, 26,978 with rural population 67512 and urban population 51858. Latehar ranks 20th in terms of population and 6th in terms of area in the state of Jharkhand. The number of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes is predominantly high here and Latehar comes under Tribal Sub Plan Area. Total ST Population of the district is 3331096 which constitute 45.54 percent of the total population of the district (Census of India, 2011). This district is characterized by a region with undulating terrain as it falls under Pat Region (900–1100 M), seasonal rivers, lateritic soil, a drought porn area, and is rich in flora and fauna. This district has a very high concentration of tribal population (45%) and about thirty (30) different tribal groups, including particularly vulnerable tribal groups like PVTGs like Asur, Parahiya, etc found here. The largest among them are Oraon (1, 59,408), Kharwar (72,287), and Chero (23,215). However, mixed cultures can be observed throughout the region. The economy especially moves around agriculture, forests, and mining.



Fig, 1: Location Map of Study Area

2. STATE-OF-THE-ART (PRELIMINARY REVIEW OF LITERATURE):

The present study holds importance in providing systematic knowledge about the role of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) in educating tribal children in Jharkhand, especially in Latehar district. While various policies have been introduced to address the poor condition of elementary education in India and Jharkhand over time, assessing the impact of a particular policy is not a new idea. Scholars from diverse disciplines such as humanities, social sciences, management and planning, education, and development have made significant efforts in assessing the impact of educational programs on children's education for example-:

- **Vyas (1991)[1]:** In a study he has presented detail analysis on social amenities and the regional development. The finding of the study explores on the fundamental question that how social amenities such as- education, health and communication facilities play a significant role in regional development.
- **Pakhuongte (1991)[2]:** In a study researcher has analyzed regional imbalances and inter-tribal inequities in educational attainments and socio-economic implications. The study intervenes at two levels: first at state level; and, second at the district level. Both focused on the education of the tribal community employing sociological and historical approach.
- **Lewin(1993)[3]:** In a study scholar has presented a detail insights on education and development. This influential work is considered as a significant and fundamental work in understanding the relations of education with development.
- **Das (1993)[4]:** In a notable work he has presented detail analysis on how regional inequality and educational development is related to each other, and with effective measures and initiatives towards educational welfare can minimize the gap of regional inequalities.
- **Miller (2007)[5]:** In a study he has presented an empirical analysis of the determinants of parental attitudes regarding girls education. It draws upon

household survey data collected in Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, and Himachal Pradesh. This study highlights the fact that, parental attitudes regarding the importance of educating girls may contribute to the gender gap in education in rural India.

- **Annual Status of Education Report (2012)[6]:** The ASER is a report published annually by ministry of education government of India, it provides comprehensive details on changing educational landscape at all level in India. According to this report at the all India level private school enrolment has been rising steadily since 2006. The percentage of 6 to 14 year olds enrolled in private schools rose from 18.7% in 2006 to 25.6% in 2011.
- **Lakshmi (2013)[7]:** The researcher conducted a study "Problems of students in Elementary Education". The objective of the study was to find out the reasons of non enrolment, non retention, dropout and quality of education.
- **Rai(2013)[8]:** He worked on the topic- 'Children and school in a society in transition: a study of Nepal and found that poor access of children was found in schools, a long conflict in Nepal' and observes that schooling even more challenging as people helplessly migrated to safer places due to conflict. Many children lost their homes, families, and their education. The dropout rate of students up to class 5th was more than 50 per cent and the number of out-of school children was very high.
- **Bora (2014)[9]:** In a study based on survey of primary schools of Uttrakhand state of India, Bora, finds that in 2013-2014 more than 178 primary schools have been closed due to Zero enrolment. And more than 5,645 government primary schools are going to close. Out of 5,645 primary schools, 800 primary schools are having below 5 students.
- **Gupta & Bilas (2017)[10]**: They studied about "Socio-Economic Status of Scheduled Tribes in Sonbhadra District, Uttar Pradesh" with aim to investigate the socio-economic status of scheduled tribes dwelling in Sonbhadra district of Uttar Pradesh. Primary data was collected through stratified random sampling method from 70 respondents of the tribal community of the district. They suggested that more effective attempts to develop the social, economical and educational status of the tribal people living in Sonbhadra district are needed.

- **Nagaraj & Karlawad(2018)[11]:** They worked on- Spatial Distribution of Education Facilities in Haveri District. The main objectives of the study were to examine the spatial distribution of primary and secondary educational facilities and to identify different levels of educational development based on the different variables at the Taluka level.
- **Siddiqui & Rahaman(2019)[12]:** In a study on "Spatio-temporal analysis of trends and patterns in change of male female literacy in Malda district, W.B." provides an insight into the existing pattern of literacy rate, intra-block variation therein and the level of disparity of male female literacy in Malda district of West Bengal.
- **Pal & Singh (2020)[13]:** They studied on "A Spatio-Temporal Analysis of Gender Related Educational Development Index of Uttar Pradesh" and highlighted that Male- Female literacy is closely related and this seems to vary similarly across an area. In-depth study of data reveals a wider male-female differential in terms of literacy in Uttar Pradesh. Factors such as patriarchy, lack of accessibility, low mobility in addition to many other reasons contribute to lower female literacy.

Though, many scholarly attempts have been taken to study the issue of education across various discipline, but in context to the Jharkhand and particularly study area 'Latehar District' it will be a new research with paramount significance.

3. PROBLEM TO BE INVESTIGATED:

The proposed study- Role of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in Educating Tribal Children in Jharkhand: A Geographical Study of Latehar District will investigate geographic characteristics of the area under study (Physical & Human) including Tribal Population, Historical development of concept of Universalisation of Elementary Education in India and Jharkhand. It will also investigate Equity, Accessibility, Retention, and Learning Outcome, community engagement, Inter-Class (Community), Gender and Block level variations in the study area. Finally, it will investigate factors affecting goals of SSA to recommend valuable suggestions for successful intervention.

4. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

The proposed research plan for Ph.D will be a study in Applied Geography entitled –Role of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in Educating Tribal Children in Jharkhand: A Geographical Study of Latehar District. Education is one of the basic needs of human life. Hence, since independence, policies have been formulated to enhance education at various levels. To fulfill this essential requirement and achieve the objectives of educational policies, various schemes have been launched at both the central and state levels. Ensuring quality improvement in school education and reaching everyone has been a crucial question for Indian education, and efforts continue to be made to address it. In this context, the presented research will assess the impact of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) on tribal children. The study will include both the tribal population and non-tribal population of Latehar district in Jharkhand to analyze the comparative effects of SSA. While this topic has been studied before, conducting a geographical study of the effects of SSA specifically on the tribal population in a particular area, especially in a state like Jharkhand where tribal communities hold significance, will be a significant research endeavor. This research will not only aid in understanding the current state of primary education but also shed light on the educational needs of specific communities residing in particular areas and effective ways to address them.

5. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The objectives of the study are:

1. To explore the geographical characteristics (including tribal population) of the area under study and to present an overview of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA).
2. To assess the availability of educational facilities and analyze accessibility to elementary education in context to enrolment, retention, learning outcomes, and community engagement under SSA in Latehar District.
3. To assess community, gender, and block-level variations in access, enrolment, retention, and learning outcomes of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and its role in educating tribal children in Latehar District.
4. To identify the key geographical and other factors faced by Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) in effectively educating tribal children and enhancing status of elementary education in Latehar District.

5. To propose recommendations and strategies to enhance the effectiveness educational interventions such as SSA, education of tribal children and elementary education in Latehar District.

6. HYPOTHESIS:

1. There is no significant impact of geographical characteristics on the function of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) initiatives in Latehar District.
2. There is no significant impact of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in increasing accessibility, enrolment, retention, and learning outcomes among children of all social groups in the area under study.
3. There is no significant active community engagement on the effective performance of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) in the area under study.
4. There are no significant community, gender and block-level variations in access, enrolment, retention, or learning outcomes under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) in Latehar District.
5. There are no significant geographical and other factors that influence Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) , education of tribal children and elementary education in Latehar District.

7. RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

1. How geographical characteristics of any particular region play a significant role in the formulation of a educational plan, implementation and overall success of educational development initiatives?
2. What are the key geographic characteristics of the study area in Latehar District, including the distribution and concentration of the tribal population, and how do these characteristics potentially related to the effectiveness of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) initiatives?
3. What is the current availability of educational facilities under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) in Latehar District, and What is the status of access, enrolment, retention, learning outcomes, and community engagement?
4. How does availability of educational facilities and accessibility to elementary education in context to enrolment, retention, learning outcomes, and community engagement under SSA vary at community, gender and spatial/block levels in Latehar District.

5. What are the main geographical and other factors that encountered by Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), education of tribal children and elementary education in Latehar District, and how do these factors affects the indicators of educational landscape?
6. What recommendations and strategies can be proposed to improve the effectiveness of educational programme such as Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), quality education to tribal children and elementary education in Latehar District, considering the identified geographical challenges and the need the community?

8. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY:

This study will employ a descriptive research design utilizing survey methods with a mix of quantitative and qualitative approaches, while data collection includes both primary and secondary sources. A sample of 36 schools from 9 blocks and 18 village panchaytas across the district is analyzed using spatial and comparative analysis tools like MS Excel and ArcGIS, interpreted through thematic mapping, bar diagrams, tables, and figures

- **Type of Research:**

The proposed research is interdisciplinary in nature and concern with social as well as applied Geography which will focus on Impact assessment of educational development programme SSA or Intervention. In such cases Evaluative Research will be a valuable approach for examining retrospectively or cross-sectional effects of the programme.

- **Method of Research:**

The primary aim of the proposed research work is to investigate, analyse and assess the impact of Sarwa Shiksha Abhiyan in Educating Tribal Children and its different aspects taking Latehar District of Jharkhand as a Case study.

The first phase of this research work will be related to collection of data related to proposed research (from both primary as well secondary sources). In the second phase of proposed research work analysis and interpretation of data will be done applying both the quantitative and qualitative methods. The following methodologies will be used for analysis and interpretation of data-

i. **Qualitative description;**
ii. **Quantitative description;**
iii. **The use and application of specific but simple statistical techniques;**
iv. **And the use of interpretative aspects to determine the nature of the benefits and impacts of the SSA.** .

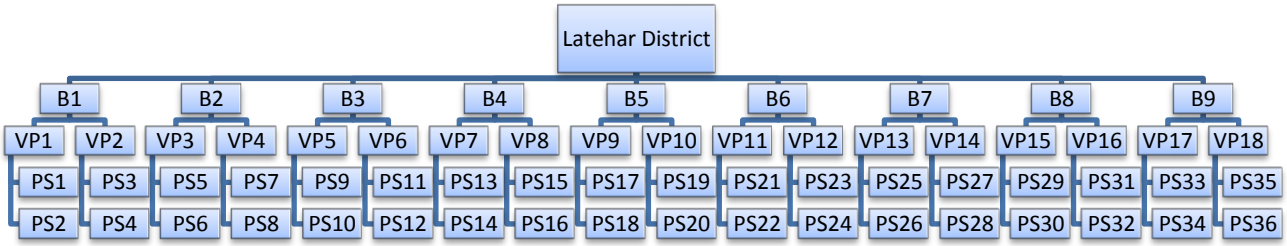
9. TOOLS TO BE USED IN COLLECTION OF DATA AND ANALYSIS:

The proposed research work is very comprehensive in nature there for it requires data pertaining to verities of aspects. Both primary and secondary data sets have to use in the study and will collected from primary as well as secondary sources -

- **Primary Data:** Primary data will be collected from multi stage sampling process. As the study area is comprises of 09 Community Development Block in which total no of villages are 769. A multi stage sampling will be done to select schools. Primary data will be related to geographic characteristics, enrolment, retention, Inter -social class (community) , gender and block variations , community engagement etc. will be collected through following tools-
  I. **Questionnaire**
  II. **Socio-economic Survey**
  III. **Careful observation, and**
  IV. **Interview of stakeholders**
- **Secondary Data:** Secondary data related to geographic background, socio-economic characteristics, Structural and functional mechanism of SSA, resources, finance, community involvement etc. will be collected from variety of sources such as –
  i. **The Census of India**
  ii. **The geographical data(Topographical Sheet and Survey Map)**
  iii. **Relevant government agency publications such as MHRD Central and State, District Gazette etc.**
  iv. **Routine data collected by state and central agencies.**

These secondary sources will be cross checked and justified with the data collected through primary sources.

Sampling Design



References: B- Block; VP- Village Panchayata; PS- Primary School

- **Tools to be used in analysis of Data**

To analyse the data related to proposed research various research tools will taken for example-

i. Once the data is collected, various Statistical tools like Tabulation, Graphical, and Diagrammatic presentation will be used for presentation.

ii. Measures of Central Tendencies i.e averages like mean, mode and median will be used for comparison. Measures of Dispersion, Standard deviation, Variance, Coefficient of variation will be used for further comparison

iii. To find relation between the characteristics, various correlation coefficients, Coefficient of Association will be used as per availability of data.

10. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROPOSED WORK:

The study on the role of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) in educating tribal children in Jharkhand, with a focus on Latehar District, holds immense importance for various stakeholders. The study will address the critical issue of educational equity, especially for tribal children who often face socio-economic disadvantages and limited access to quality education. Understanding the role of SSA in improving educational opportunities for these marginalized communities can inform policymakers and educators to devise targeted interventions. The findings of this study can offer valuable insights for

policymakers and education authorities to assess the effectiveness of educational interventions like –SSA and further to identify areas in which improvement is required. The geographical study of Latehar District provides a spatial context of assessment of any educational policy. This understanding can serve as a blueprint for other similar areas facing similar issues in the state and beyond. The study's findings can aid in the formulation of more effective and specific strategies to bridge the educational gap and ensure inclusive education for tribal children in Jharkhand.

11. CONTRIBUTION TO EXISTING KNOWLEDGE:

The tribal community makes up a large part of the population of the state of Jharkhand and majority of the tribal population resides in those areas of the state which are not only socially-economically backward but also have a wide variety of cultural diversity in their habitats. It is seen that for the success of any welfare programs, it is necessary to study the situation and locational factors and revaluate the plan. Although researchers from different disciplines studied the effects of various schemes related to education, but in respect to the tribal population, the study of such schemes will be a new and relevant work in perspective. Therefore, we see that when we evaluate the causes and effects in the perspective of tribal population, it will not only enrich the existing knowledge but also the possibilities of future work.

12. FUTURE WORK:

The present research work has very wide scope in assessing impact of educational programme launched at various levels in the country. In one hand this proposed work can be used as base to evaluate performance of educational schemes introduced at various level in reference to a small unit area while in other hand it can be used to assess average performance of the particular educational initiatives at national level to facilitate necessary information and strategy for strengthening education system in the country. Particularly in context of Jharkhand where tribal population constitute major part of the total population this work can be further extended to study the socio – economic context, schooling and education of various tribal groups in special basis.

13. TENTATIVE SCHEME OF CHAPTERISATION:

To these ends the tentative plan of chapters is as under-

Chapter I, Introduction: Research Overview, Geographical Characteristics of Study area, Historical Evolution of SSA.

Chapter II, Review of Related Literature: The Second chapter will be related to Review of Literature in respect to Jharkhand, India and abroad on Primary Education and its various aspects in interdisciplinary perspective.

Chapter III, Research Methodology: This chapter will present details of the objectives of the study along with size of the sample, selection of tools, statistical resources used for analysis and interpretation of data collected.

Chapter IV, Access, Enrolment, Retention, Learning Outcome and Community Engagement of SSA in Latehar District

Chapter V, Community, Gender and Block Level Variations in Access, Enrolment, Retention, and Learning Outcome of SSA in Latehar District

Chapter VI: Factors affecting SSA

Chapter VII: Main Findings, Conclusion and Suggestions.

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